

[IMAGE]

Another Danger of Obesity During Pregnancy

By Editorial Staff

Pregnancy health is always a popular topic, and it's been in the news quite a bit recently, and we're not just talking about maternal health. Increasing research connects your health during pregnancy with fetal health, newborn health and even the health of your child when they're older. Overall, the research suggests the healthier you are while expecting, the healthier your child will be at all stages of life.

In many cases, the mother's weight is a major variable in these health discussions. For example, a new study in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* found that maternal obesity increases the risk that a female child will experience early puberty. Among more than 15,000 mother-daughter pairs, girls whose mothers were obese during pregnancy were more likely to develop breasts and other puberty characteristics sooner than girls whose mothers were normal weight during pregnancy.

So, what's wrong with early puberty? Actually, a great deal from a health perspective. Commenting in an article on the research in Reuters Health, lead study author Dr. Ali Kubo said: "Young age at puberty in girls is associated with numerous adverse emotional and behavioral outcomes, including higher risk for anxiety, depression, body dissatisfaction, early sexual initiation and pregnancy during adolescence, and later in life, risks of cardiac problems, all-cause mortality, and breast and reproductive cancers."

The moral to this story is simple: Health is a full-time job! Whether you're pregnant, thinking about conceiving a child or getting back in shape after your child's birth, healthy habits including balanced nutrition and consistent exercise are critical. Talk to your doctor for more information on prenatal and postnatal health. It's important for you *and* your child.

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